

1917.7321

IBEA

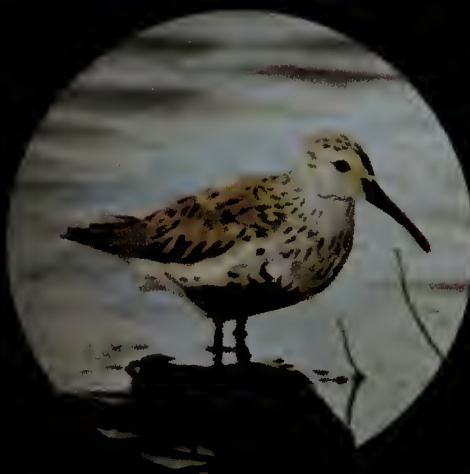
1964

C.3

ORCHID
Swink



RED BACK SANDPIPER
Swink



ILLINOIS BEACH STATE PARK



ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY

HEDRICH-BLESSING

*on beautiful Lake Michigan . . .
in historic Northern Illinois*



Illinois Beach State Park, the first state park to offer public swimming, extends three and a half miles along Lake Michigan between Zion and Waukegan and includes 1,651 acres. The park was opened to the public in 1948 but the scenic and scientific treasures of this area have been recognized since the late eighteen hundreds. Robert Douglas, Waukegan nurseryman, and Jens Jensen, the famous landscape architect, discussed making this a regional park in 1888.

Finest Swimming Facilities

The park is being developed to provide the finest facilities. Since its opening one bathhouse that can accommodate 8,000 or more swimmers at one time has been open. In 1963 work was completed on three additional bathhouses with accompanying concession facilities. The beach houses contain modern checking rooms, dressing courts, showers and toilets. A registered nurse is always on duty. The 1000-foot shoreline has life guards on duty at all times during the season.

A children's playground adjoins the main parking area. Ample picnic grounds are provided where there is good shade. There is a separate area for tent and trailer campers. Permits, for which there is a small charge, must be obtained from the park custodian.

Unusual Natural Interests

Of greatest interest in the park are the unusual natural features, preservation of which has been urged for many years. The park consists of a series of low sand ridges covered with scrubby black oaks interspersed with marshes extending north and south, parallel to the Lake Michigan shore.

Once this was part of Lake Michigan. As the ice retreated following the last glacier over 10,000 years ago, the lake dropped in two 20-foot stages to the present level. The fluctuating levels of the lake produced the series of sandy and gravelly ridges and swales. The

GOLDEN PLOVER
Swink



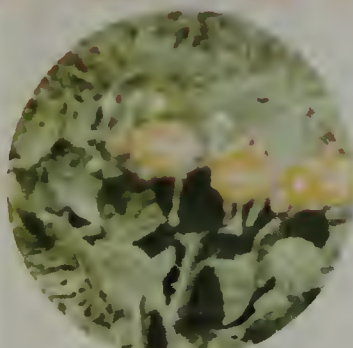
BUTTERFLY WEED
Reuss



BEARBERRY
Swink



ILLINOIS BEACH



PRICKLY-PEAR CACTUS
Swink



RUDDY TURNSTONE
Swink



BLAZING STAR
Swink

present sand ridges represent parallel crests of sand that were on the old lake bottom.

Unique Among State Parks

The plant life of this area differs entirely from that of any other Illinois state park and bears marks of the last glacial period. From June through September beautiful prairie flowers dominate the landscape—beginning with shooting star, yellow star grass, Indian paintbrush, hoary puccoon, the prairie phlox in late spring; continuing with prickly pear cactus, blazing star, wild sunflower and coreopsis in summer, and following with goldenrod, asters, grass of Parnassus, ladies' tresses and fringed gentian in autumn.

An interesting feature of the park's plantlife is the magnificent display of trailing juniper near the lake shore south of the lodge. This, associated with bearberry, makes a beautiful natural landscape that could not be duplicated except at an exorbitant cost. A selected horticultural strain of this magnificent plant is known in the nursery trade as the Waukegan juniper.

Dune Plantlife Differs

Closer to the shore are colonies of beach wormwood, sand cherry and little bluestem grass. Near the beach are colonies of sand reed and marram grass with underground stems penetrating through the sand. These stems hold the sand in check and stabilize it to form miniature dunes. The Illinois Beach dunes are small because the prevailing winds here are westerly, thus blowing out from the land to the lake.

When northeast winds do come, they are generally stormy, and being wet, blow little sand. In contrast, on the Michigan and Indiana sides of the lake shore, the prevailing westerly winds have deposited very high dunes.

Of unusual interest is Dead River, which flows very slowly through a large section of the park. Its rate of



STATE PARK

flow is so feeble, however, that quite often its mouth is bottled up by a sand bar which develops along the shore. The pines near Dead River are dominant. They are largely Austrian and Scotch, planted here by Robert Douglas in the 1860's. A small remnant of the native pines is also left along the river.

The rare down yellow painted cup is found in its easternmost natural distribution in this pine area. A peculiar flower found floating just below the surface of the park's marsh water is the *Wolffia Columbiana*, the smallest flowering plant in the world.

Galaxy of Unusual Insects

According to scientists, along with the plants occurs a galaxy of unusual insects. Unique is a group of northern caddisflies in Dead River. The larvae of these aquatic insects make either portable cases or a special cocoon in the water. When mature, the pupae swim to the surface, crawl up on a plant stem, and emerge as adults. Three species found here are foreign to the rest of the state.

In addition to the caddisflies are the bearberry leafhopper and aphid, and a leafhopper and an aphid on meadowsweet. A few of these northern insects are of unusual interest as they represent some of the elements that have evolved within the eastern temperate deciduous forests and have never spread to other areas.

Mecca for Bird Lovers

Many birds use the lake shore for their spring and fall migrations. Among them are the common and black terns, regular visitors to this area. The rarer Caspian tern is also seen here occasionally. Making an impressive showing along the beach in the spring are large groups of shorebirds such as the Dunlin, black-bellied plover, turnstones and Sanderlings, that flock along the gravel beaches. The Dunlin travel in flocks and it is a great sight to see them in their spring plumage with red backs



and black bellies. The turnstones provide quite a show as they go up and down the beach turning every stone looking for food. The plovers enjoy running up and down the beach and the piping plovers are often hard to see because of their swiftness.

Other birds of the area are the Canada goose, killdeer, great blue heron, marsh hawk, grebs of various species, many ducks, gulls and a host of wading shorebirds. The swampy areas are fairly alive with red-wing blackbirds.

Many Uses Made of Park Area

The park land has had a great many uses over the years. About 1915 the Essanay moving picture company used this site as a location for many of their films, some starring Charlie Chaplin. The Chicago & North Western Railway once operated a gravel pit in one section. Here, for a number of years, a company cut ice to fill its ice-houses. During World War II troops stationed at Fort Sheridan used the dune area for training.

The Illinois Dunesland Preservation Society, audubon and nature groups are working closely with the state to preserve this singular heritage for both scientific and recreational observation. The public is expected to co-operate by not picking flowers, molesting the wildlife, or creating fire hazards when smoking.

Location 32 Indian Workshops

Early settlers here found 32 workshop sites where the Indians fashioned implements for hunting, fishing and war. Hundreds of arrowheads, axeheads, mallets and other stone tools, as well as pottery, have been found. Most of the implements discovered were imperfect, indicating that they had been used, discarded or replaced. Other crude tools indicate that the Indians raised corn here. As late as 85 years ago several sites on the bluffs above the dunes showed the remains of tilled rows. Unfortunately, articles found were never systematically collected and have become scattered or lost through the years.

Indian Trail Trees Preserved

Other interesting reminders of the Indian occupancy are the Indian Trail Trees. Many tribes marked their trails by blazing the trees with an axe, but the local Potawatomi marked their trails by bending young saplings, usually elm or oak, about four feet from the ground and pointing them in the desired direction. The bent part was fastened to the ground and after some time was permanently bent. Later the top grew vertically again, making a lasting marker. Some of these markers supposedly led to the lake shore workshops.

Of the Indian trail trees remaining, one is located north of Zion, two in Highland Park and a few elsewhere. The Daughters of the American Revolution have marked several of them.

French Explorers Passed Here

Nearly 300 years ago Father Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit priest and the first white man to set foot on Illinois soil, passed the park site twice as he went along the west shore of Lake Michigan. Some historians say, however, that Jean Nicolet was the first Frenchman to visit this section. In 1634 he passed through the Straits of Mackinac on his voyage to Green Bay to make peace between the Huron and Winnebago Indians. Accompanied only by Indians, he may have come south to the dune region.

Other illustrious explorers who visited this area were Jolliet, Tonti, Hennepin, Vincennes and Duluth. Following the lake shore, travelers were frequently forced by storms to land here and portage to the Des Plaines River or the Skokie, which in those days was a chain of lakes instead of the marshland it is today.

Newest of State Park Lodges

Many persons are attracted by the exquisite but quiet atmosphere and natural beauty along the lake shore and nature trails; for others, however, the principal attraction is the magnificent lodge in the north section. The first park lodge built in 20 years, it offers the finest in accommodations and meals.



REDWING BLACKBIRD
Allen



SCOTCH PINE
Swink



KILLDEER
Allen



GUEST ROOM



DINING ROOM

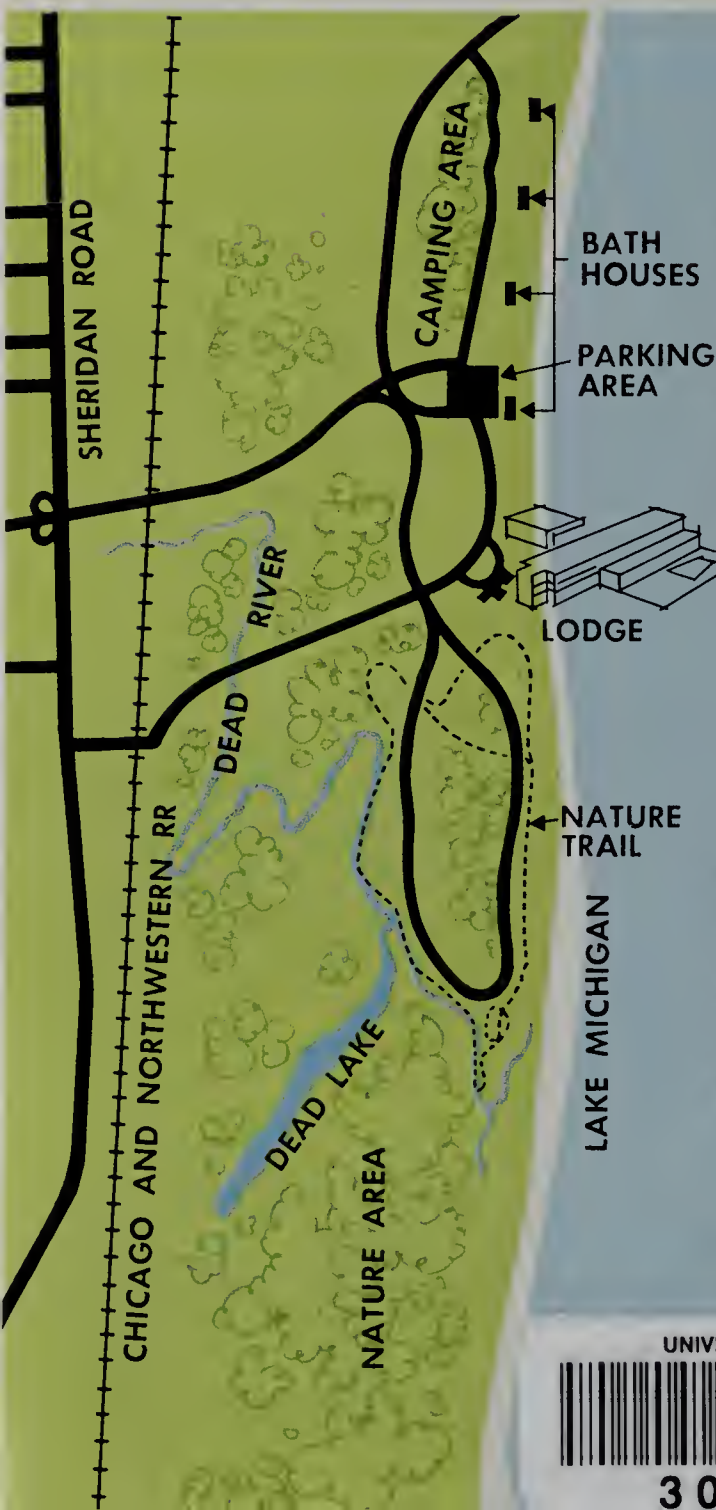
The dramatically styled contemporary building is of concrete, glass and colorful stone. It has 96 Lanai-type guest rooms, each with its private terrace and lounge chairs, and offering a magnificent view of the lake. Each room has individual control heating and air-conditioning.

There are dining facilities for five to 500 persons and assembly rooms for parties and meetings. Recreational facilities include ping pong, tennis, badminton, baseball, children's playground and an Olympic-sized pool that is open the year around. Near the park are riding stables and 18-hole country club golf course available to lodge guests.



LOBBY

ILLINOIS BEACH STATE PARK



Write to the Division of Parks and Memorials, State Office Building, Springfield, for further information concerning Illinois Parks and Memorials. Eighty-two State Parks and Memorials are of easy access from every part of the State. Lodges and cabins are an important feature of Illinois Beach, Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest and Giant City State Parks. Reservations should be made with lodge managers.

PICNICKING — There are Picnic areas with pure water, fireplaces with wood and picnic tables in designated areas. No cooking may be done except on park stoves.

PUBLIC CAMPING — Sites for tents or trailers are available. A Camping Permit must be obtained from the Park Custodian who will assign a site. Permits are issued up to one week.

Issued by
**Division of Parks
and Memorials**
Department of Conservation
Room 100, State Office Building
Springfield, Illinois

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 122557561